

The Date of the Hikayat Inderaputera.

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Many MSS. of this romance exist. References and descriptions will be found in van der Tuuk's catalogue of Malay MSS. belonging to the Royal Asiatic Society ("Essays relating to Indo-China," vol. II, p. 10); in Juynboll's catalogue of the Leiden MSS. (p. 121); in van Ronkel's catalogue of the Batavian MSS. (p. 97) and in Snouck Hurgronje's "The Achehnese," vol. II, p. 148. There are also MSS. of it at Brussels and the Hague. The late Mr. D. F. A. Hervey owned a copy (300 pp., dated 1307 Malacca). An edition has been lithographed in Singapore (A.H. 1321); the text of which judged beside the selections given by van der Tuuk and Juynboll is corrupt. A poem, the *Shair Indrapura*, founded on the prose work has been printed in Singapore.

Many quotations from the romance are given in Werndly's "Maleische Spraakkunst" (1736), and the book is mentioned by Valentijn (ed. 1726), III, p. 26. Nowhere have I found any reference which puts back the date of its composition earlier than 1726 A.D.

There is a well-known religious work the *Sirat ul-mustakim* composed by Shaikh Nuru'd-din the author of the *Bustanu's-salatin* in A.H. 1044 (1634 A.D.)—Juynboll's "Catalogus," p. 257 wrongly gives the equivalent of the Muhammadan date as 1628 A.D. Of this work there are several MSS. at Leiden and Batavia; one edition lithographed in Singapore in 1330 A.H. (giving the date of the original composition 1044 A.H. on the cover); one printed in Masir (Egypt) in the margin of the *Sabil al-muhtadin*, which is founded on the *Sirat ul-mustakim*. Now on p. 32 of the lithographed edition and on p. 39 of the printed marginal edition occurs the sentence: *tiada harus bĕrsuchi dĕngan suatu bĕnda yang di-hormati pada shara' sapĕrti tulang dan kulit yang bĕlum di-samak atau barang sa-bagai-nya, tetapi harus istinja' dĕngan kitab Taurat dan Injil yang sudah bĕrubah dari-pada asal-nya dan dĕ-mikian-lah harus istinja' dĕngan kitab yang tiada bĕrguna pada shara' sapĕrti Hikayat Sĕri Rama dan Indraputĕra, dan barang sa-bagai-nya, jika tiada di-dalam-nya nama Allah.*

Professor Dr. Ph. van Ronkel has been good enough to examine the two Leiden MSS. and informs me that the passage occurs in both of them. He agrees with me that the passage may be accepted as occurring in Shaikh Nuru'd-din's original work, so that clearly the reference proves the *Hikayat Indĕraputĕra* to be old enough to have been quoted as a profane classic in 1634. That

the Malay *Hikayat Sēri Rama* (derived from a Tamil version) goes back to that period we know, because Archbishop Laud had acquired the Bodleian copy in 1633. Perhaps the fact that of the *Hikayat Indērāputēra* there are Bugis Macassar and Achehnese redactions is contributory evidence of its age.

In the Singapore edition and in some of the MSS. of the *Hikayat* there are a large number of *pantun*.

It is to be hoped that from the many MSS. a critical and scholarly edition of this romance may some day be prepared. Meanwhile it would help towards that end if the "Commissie voor de Volkslectuur" of Netherlands India were to print in its excellent series a text or texts from the two MSS. in Batavia.

